



**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
TOWN OF NEW MARLBOROUGH
OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
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**Tara B. White, Chair
Michele Shalaby
Nathaniel H. Yohalem
Board of Selectmen**

**Minutes of Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, September 22, 2014**

Board Members Present: Tara B. White, Chairman
Michele Shalaby
Nat Yohalem

Others Present:

Sharon Fleck, Administrative Secretary
Charles Loring
Nicolas Reitzel
Prue Spaulding

The meeting of the Board of Selectmen convened at 5:30 p.m.

The Board read the minutes. **After a discussion, a motion was made and seconded and so voted by all members to approve the minutes of the Monday, September 22, 2014 Selectmen's meeting, as amended.**

Highway Superintendent Contract – Chuck stated he felt he wasn't compensated for the number of overtime hours he puts in. He suggested that the Board make the decision as to what the additional compensation figure should be. Selectmen Yohalem suggested that Chuck's salary be raised to \$63,500, effective September 22, 2014. Chuck signed his contract for FY15. **A motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to increase the Highway Superintendent's salary to \$63,500, effective September 22, 2014.**

Nicolas Reitzel, Stantec re. Clayton Mill River Bridge – Nicolas Reitzel presented the Board with an entire package containing a full set of design drawings and specifications, a copy of the Notice of Intent, a copy of the "Water Quality Certification," and a copy of the "Notification of Wetlands Protection Act." Nicolas stated he received "comment sheets" from the DEP, which indicated that this bridge was more than just a minor repair. He indicated that the bridge, in fact, is a Category 2. Nicolas said he spoke with Jeff Collingswood who had spoken with the State who indicated that Stantec's bridge design would probably be suitable. He also stated that the bridge could be reconditioned as opposed to be replaced, which would be much less expensive, and further cost savings could be realized if the Highway Department managed the building of

bridge, as they did for the Foley Bridge. The cost of reconditioning the bridge would be approximately \$180,000 plus an additional \$12,000 paid to Stantec for additional engineering. Highway Superintendent, Loring, said there were enough "contingency" monies to cover the additional engineering costs. The length of time to complete the reconditioning of this bridge next year is estimated to be 4-6 weeks. Nicolas further discussed using Wilkinson, as opposed to putting a bid out, would be acceptable unless State monies are used. Nicolas further advised using the County program for buying certain materials, such as guardrails, stone and concrete, would also help the Town save money. Within the proposal submitted by Stantec is a draft of the contract. He suggested the Town review the proposal, contact him with any changes, then sign a completed proposal and return it to Stantec so they can start working their way through the bureaucracy. Nicolas further pledged his support and help to the Town in completing this project.

July Storms – Chairman White explained that although the invoices for the July storms were to be submitted by September 30, neighboring towns were petitioning the DOT for an extension until May 2015. Michael Skorput to send a letter also requesting additional time for this work to be completed and invoices submitted to the State. Highway Superintendent explained that two other towns were given extensions until May 2015.

Eichstedt Property – Selectmen Yohalem suggested we send a copy of the Eichstedt letter to the insurance company, asking them to reconsider their decision based on the homeowner's version of the events, and to Jeremia Pollard.

Reverse 911 Calls – It was agreed that the Emergency Management Director, Ed Harvey, and the Police Chief, Graham Frank, discuss what is going to be said on the 911 reverse calls, so everyone in Town is aware of problems.

Mepal Property and Hakulin Property – Letters will be sent to each advising them that the State of Massachusetts will not allow penalties and interest to be waived above \$15.

Assistant Tax Collector - A motion was made, seconded and so voted to appoint Kathy Chretien as Assistant Tax Collector. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to increase Kathy's salary by \$2,000 per year. An ad has been prepared for the newspaper advertising for a new tax collector.

Tax Collector – Chairman White explained that there was a meeting with Caren Adams that afternoon at 1 p.m. addressing the tax bills and the inserts that were being put in the Tax Bills, that stated hours not having been approved by the Board. The Tax Collector asserted that she would not put her name on the new inserts that had been prepared, or on the bills, because those were not the hours she claimed for which she was hired. Caren then claimed that "we should just nip this in the bud now and fire her." Subsequent to that meeting, a letter was sent to Caren stating that she is terminated immediately. Caren does have the right to respond within two days and request a hearing. Caren then proceeded to clean out her office; she left her keys, passwords, etc. Corrected tax bills and inserts will be assembled by the Seniors and sent out prior to the October 1, 2014 deadline.

Dave Herrick's Form – His request for earlier hours (10 a.m.) for liquor to be sold on Sundays has been approved and submitted to the State.

Police Contract - Will be discussed at the 09-29-14 Selectmen's Meeting.

New Growth Policy – As prepared by the Tax Assessor has been approved by the Board.

Insuring Headstone Restoration – A letter was received from the Historical Society requesting whether or not the restored headstones can be insured. Per Mike Skorput's information to Selectman Shalaby, MIIA advised that these headstones cannot be insured. However, for those headstones for which no family still exists that are very old and in need of restoration, the Historical Society would like to be able to insure just those stones after restoration. Selectman Shalaby will investigate and advise if insuring select headstones is possible, and will ask the Historical Society to contact Pittsfield, who did have an issue with vandalism in their cemetery.

Signs – Michael Skorput fax'd the Town's new policy on signs to Michael White. Sandisfield will be sent a copy of New Marlborough's policy on signs.

Trees – The Tree Warden will look at the trees on John Manikowski's property to determine if there are ones that are in danger of falling on Town property.

Capital Planning Committee - Format issues were discussed at the last meeting and will continue at their next meeting. There also will be mechanisms in place to address changes.

False Alarms – Selectman Nat Yohalem discussed the number of false alarms every year that both the Fire Department and the Police Department receive. Fines were discussed regarding this subject and it was agreed that there would be no charge for the first false alarm; \$25 for the second false alarm and \$50 for the third false alarm. It was agreed that both the Fire Department and the Police Department will keep track of those false alarms. At the end of each quarter, those reports will be given to a designated person who will then send out bills to those residents.

Bridge from Ohio – The Board decided they would not consider using a bridge from Ohio, as the one bridge was built in the 1930's, but reconditioned in 1980's, and none of the bridges available matched our specifications. Alan Lombardi will continue to monitor available bridges to determine if any might match the Town's needs.

Shared Services – Selectman Yohalem advised of a legal notice posted in "The Record" the week of September 12-18, authorizing the school district to borrow \$6 million to replace the roof and boilers in Sheffield. A phone call was then placed to Vito Valentini, who is the head of Buildings and Grounds Committee. Selectman Yohalem, Dave Smith and Rhonda LaBombard then reminded Mr. Valentini of a meeting held in New Marlborough in the Spring wherein the cost was going to be \$3 million, and that the State would pay for half of it; however since that meeting, Mr. Valentini advised it would have to be done the State's way bringing the cost to \$6 million. The school district is talking with the State to try and get those numbers revised. And, now the State is only willing to pay 39.6% and not 50%. Mr. Valentini assured Selectman Yohalem and before anyone holds a meeting, the school district would come before each of the five towns with a detailed presentation of the cost and what percentage the State was willing to pay.

There also was a shared services meeting in Sheffield with the Highway Superintendent, the Town Administrator as well as David Smith. Other attendees were: the Monterey Highway Superintendent, Egremont's Highway Superintendent, as well as Chuck Loring. It was agreed that future meetings should be attended by a Selectperson from the other two Towns. Tyringham, Sandisfield and one or two other Towns will be invited to future meetings. One of the issues discussed was a \$120,000 mower, which, if divided among 3 towns (New Marlborough,

Monterey, Sheffield) would be \$40,000. Similar savings could occur for the purchase of a Hot Box, Pavers with Rollers and a Trailer. Additional savings could be realized through the purchase of sand and gravel with Sheffield. Chairman White suggested we put out a bid now for sand and gravel. Chuck Loring is in communication with the Sheffield Highway Department. These combined savings opportunities would have to be brought before each of the Selectboards to determine their interest in participating.

Selectman Yohalem also advised that Police Chief Frank spoke of wanting to have an additional cruiser in May 2015. Police Chief Frank advised that Sheffield turns over one of their cruisers every two years. Sheffield usually strips that cruiser and sells it for about \$1,000. Police Chief Frank spoke with the Police Chief in Sheffield and said that the Town might be interested in acquiring that cruiser. The Sheffield Police Chief then stated he would speak with the Board and recommend they give that cruiser, unstripped, to the Town of New Marlborough as part of shared services.

At that Department Head meeting, Chuck Loring advised all of the Highway Superintendents stated that there is enough paperwork to keep a clerical person busy one day a week, and that perhaps that a Highway Secretary could be shared with three other towns.

The next meeting is October 17 at 10:30 a.m. in Sheffield. Chairman White suggested that the possibility of hiring a shared mechanic be discussed at their next meeting.

Being that there was no further business to be brought before the Board, a motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Fleck
Administrative Secretary